

To the Right Honourable, the house of Commons

assembled in Parliament.



The humble Petition and Answer of *Marin de Boisleree*, *Roger Wood*, and *Thomas Symcock*, to the Stationers Petition.

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It pleased his Maiestie in the seauenteenth yeare of his Highnesse Raigne, to graunt vnto *Roger Wood* and *Thomas Symcock*, the Printing of Paper and Parchment vpon one side onely, reseruing ten pound *per annum*, in recompence of the acceptable seruice of *Marin de Boisleree*, Esquire of the body to his Maiestie, who hath serued his Highnesse, and liued in this Kingdome with his family sixteene yeares, and hath bene many times, and lately imployed by his Maiestie in waighy affaires in diuers forraigne Countries, and done his Maiestie very acceptable seruice, but neuer receiued any benefit or recompence for his sixteene yeares seruice, except this small thing, which by the Stationers owne confession, is not worthy of his Maiesties priuiledge.

And whereas *Thomas Man* and some others of the Company of Stationers, haue lately petitioned this Honourable Assembly, that they haue euer had the free vse of printing these things from the first times the same were inprinted, vntill the seauenteenth yeare of his Maiesties raigne, and if the benefit thereof be taken from them, it will redound to the great hinderance of them and their families, who maintaine themselves thereby, and all other his Maiesties Subiects that haue occasion to vse the same, and pray they may haue free liberty to imprint the things graunted as they haue done before the Letters Patents were made;

The Kings Maiestie by vertue of his prerogatiue Royall, may graunt this priuiledge of Printing vnto the Patentees, and all other priuiledges of printing at his pleasure, and is not restrained by any law to the contrary: For his Maiestie, the late Queene *Elizabeth*, and their Progenitors, haue graunted diuers priuiledges of sole printing, and of great worth, as well to Gentlemen as Citizens not free of the Company of Stationers: which Graunts are quietly enioyed at this time, and are not questioned by the Petitioners, who doe onely proceede in their complaint against this perticular Graunt, for that these Patentees haue vpon intreatie of the poore Printers, refused to sell vnto some of the Petitioners, the interest of their Patent, which is graunted by his Maiestie vpon certificate and examination before the Company of Stationers, and their learned Counsell.

There are but 22. Master Printers, who with their Apprentizes and Iourney-men, doe Print all things for all England, Ireland, and Wales: and if the Printing of all things giuen in priuiledge by his Maiestie for the benefit of the poore Masters and Iourney-men Printers, were equally distributed as it ought to be by the Master, Wardens, and other great rich men of the Company according to his Maiesties Graunt, euery one might haue full employment: but the rich men of the Company by the power of their ordinances, dispose of all things in priuiledge to their owne perticular benefits for the most part, and the poore Masters, and Iourney-men Printers, haue little, and some of them no worke at all from the Company, who are not suffered to Print what things in priuiledge they are able to doe, as all other Trades-men are accustomed, but what they can get from the Company, who haue power by their ordinances to dispose thereof at their pleasures, by which meanes the poore Printers and their Families suffer great wants.

The Petitioners against the Patent are made thirty and one in number, without the knowledge and consent of diuers of them: and this Graunt is opposed principally by foure rich Printers, viz. Master *Loumes*, Master *Purfoote*, Master *Jaggard*, and Master *Beale*. Master *Loumes* now Maister of his Company, a man of great worth, when he was made Warden foure yeares agoe or thereabouts (and not from the beginning, as in their Petition is alledged) procured an ordinance from the Company for the sole printing and selling of all Indentures for Apprentizes. Master *Purfoote* procured all Brieses for collections in like manner. Master *Jaggard* all Play-bills: and Master *Beale* all Bonds and Recognizances for Viſtualers. And if any poore Printer who had heretofore vsually printed these things did print any of them, these foure rich Printers being men of great worth, and all of them of the Liuerie of their Company, presently caused the poore Printers Presse and Letters to be seised, and the party either imprisoned or fined at their pleasures, by the power of their ordinance made by the Company, which is as much as can be done by the power of his Maiesties priuiledge, by which meanes they enioy the sole printing and selling of these things.

And whereas the things graunted by this Patent, are Printed in this Kingdome and in forraigne Countries, and by French and Dutch-men here, and by forraigners and free-men of other Companies, and by these fewe rich Printers: the Patentees by vertue of his Maiesties Graunt, are able and willing to place all things belonging to this Patent vpon the poore Masters and Iourney-men Printers that are driuen to extreame wants (after eight or nine yeares seruice) for lacke of employment and meanes to sustaine themselves and families, which benefit they cannot receiue by any other meanes. And if the Patentees doe place the printing of these things vpon the poore Masters and Iourney-men Printers, They humbly submit the further consideration thereof to this Honourable Assembly, whether the poore of the Company of Printers, and Stationers, and Subiects in generall, shall receiue any preiudice or grieuance thereby. And the performance and continuance thereof is not to be doubted, by reason the Patentees are no Printers, and can take no Apprentizes, nor benefit of their Patent but by imploying the poore, whereas if this priuiledge were in the rich Printers hands, they and their Apprentizes would doe all the worke, and receiue the benefit from the poore to their owne vse as they doe at this time, and euer heretofore haue done with all other priuiledges.

And whereas heretofore diuers persons haue bene executed, and some now in prison for counterfait Letters Patents by which they haue collected in all Churches in England and Wales, to the great abuse of his Maiestie and Subiects in generall: the Patentees doe carefully examine the lawfulnessse of euery Patent, and apprehend the party if there be cause. And if any thing come to be Printed that hath not good allowance, stay is made thereof; or if it intend to ribauldry or immodesty, whereby to giue ill example to youth or others in the Common-wealth, the Patentees make stay thereof, and onely Print those things that are meete and tollerable to be Printed for the benefit and conueniencie of the Subiects, without raising any price, or giuing any offence to the Subiect that hath occasion to vse the same.

In regard his Maiestie and his Highnesse Progenitors, haue euer graunted all priuiledges of Printing at their pleasures, and that the Patentees doe imploy the poore Masters and Iourney-men Printers, in Printing the things graunted, who were hindred from doing the same by the power of an ordinance of the Company made to foure rich Printers:

That this Honourable Assembly would be pleased to consider of the premisses, and that the Patent may be quietly enioyed by the Patentees, and put in full execution, as all other priuiledges of Printing are, according to his Maiesties pleasure, and prerogatiue Royall, and that the Petitioners may bee inabled by this Honorable assembly to produce the proofes of the premisses.